لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله

إن الدين عند الله الإسلام

THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

Tabuk 1357 H.S.—September 1978

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EDITOR

M. G. AHMAD

THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM

The Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, was born in 1835 in Qadian, a village in India. In the eighties of the 19th century, he was called to the office of World Reformer to combat the false Religious Philosophies and to explode the Christian theory of redemption based on the fiction of Christ's death on the Cross and to tell the Christians and Muslims to call off their hope for a second visit from Christ as he had been gathered to his fore-fathers and barred like all mortals from coming back to the world, and that he had come instead as the Promised Messiah.

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The Promised Messiah initiated the Ahmadiyya Movement to revive faith in God, challenging rival churches to a spiritual contest to seek Divine sanction for the religion He favoured, through prayer and appeal to Him for guidance and arbitration in the matter, by means of His signs, to re-establish the glory of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, to expound and disseminate spiritual beauties and moral excellences of the teachings of the Holy Quran, to wean men from war-like tendencies and to educate world opinion in favour of renunciation of war as a means of settling disputes, to infuse hope, faith and courage in the drooping hearts of Muslims and all the depressed races and nations of the world, to warn the exploiters, slave-drivers and pedlars in sin against the evil consequences for their evil ways, to collect under one banner all the true followers of Islam and lovers of peace and to inculcate among them the spirit of tolerance, good will and selfless fellow-service and a feeling of true brother-hood.

The Promised Messiah passed away in 1908 and was succeeded by his foremost votary and closest companion, Hazrat Hafiz Haji Hakim Maulvi Noor-ud-Din as Khalifa-tul Masih I. After his death in 1914, the Promised Son of the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Haji Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, was chosen as Khalifa-tul Masih II. During his 52-year long leader-ship, the Khalifa-tul Masih II organized a world-girdling chain of mosques and missions. On his death on November 8, 1965, the electoral college named with one accord, Sahibzada Hafiz Mirza Nasir Ahmad, Promised Messiah's grandson, Khalifa-tul Masih III.

For further information about the Movement, its activities, aims, objectives and literature, enquiries may be addressed to the nearest Ahmadiyya Mission or direct to :

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Rabwah, Pakistan.

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SECRETARY
Ahmadiyya Muslim Foreign Missions,
Tahrik-i-Jadid, Rabwah, Pakistan.

THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF ISLAM

This is an organ of the Ahmadiyya Movement which represents true Islam. It deals with religions, ethical, social and economic questions, Islamic mysticism and current topics. It also provides Book Review.

It is open to all for discussing problems vital to the religious and spiritual welfare of man, but it does not give any assurance to publish all articles received by the Editor, nor does it accept responsibility for views expressed by contributors.

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Annual subscription including packing and postage :

1.	Pakistan and Ceylon	... Rs. 15
2.	England aud other steiling areas	... £ 3.
3.	U.S.A. and other doller areas	... $ 3.00

Notes : Cheque and drajts should preferably be drawn on a Pakistan bank. In case a bill or cheque is drawn on a foreign bank, a collection charge of 50 cents for U. S. A. and 4 sh. for U.K. should be added to the amount of subscription.

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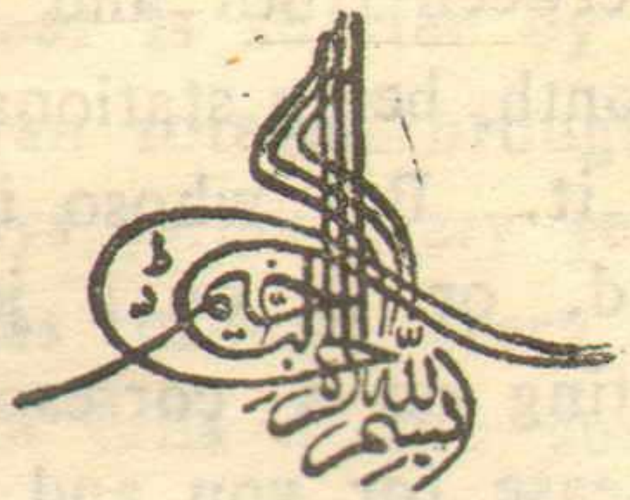

نحمدہ ونصلی علی رسولہ الکریم

The Review of Religions

RABWAH, PAKISTAN

Vol. LXXIII September 1978—Tabuk 1357 No. 7

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FASTING

by

SIR MUHAMMAD ZAFRULLA KHAN

The Holy Quran states :

"O ye who believe, fasting is prescribed for you during a fixed number of days as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may safeguard yourselves against every kind of ill and become righteous. But whoso from among you should be ailing, not being permanently incapacitated, or should be on a journey, shall complete the reckoning by fasting on a corresponding number of other days ; and for those who find fasting a strain hard to bear is an expiation, the feeding of a poor person, if they can afford it. Whoso carries through a good work with eager obedience, it is the better for him. If you possessed knowledge you would realise that it is better for you that you should fast" (2 : 184-185).

"The month of Ramadhan is the month in which the

Quran began to be revealed, the Book which comprises guidance for mankind and clear proofs of guidance and divine Signs which discriminate between truth and falsehood. Therefore, he who witnesses this month, being stationary and in good health, should fast through it. But whoso is ailing, not being permanently incapacitated, or is on a journey, should complete the reckoning by fasting on a corresponding number of other days. Allah desires ease for you and desires not hardship for you; He has granted you this facility so that you should encounter no hardships in completing the reckoning, and that you may exalt Allah for His having guided you and that you may be grateful to Him" (2 : 186).

"It is made lawfull for you to consort with your wives during the nights of the fast. They are as a garment for you and you are as a garment for them. Allah knows that you were being unjust to yourselves, wherefore He has turned to you with mercy and has corrected your error. So consort with them now without compunction and seek that which Allah has ordained for you, and eat and drink till the break of dawn begins to manifest itself. From then on, complete the fast till nightfall. But do not consort with your wives during the period when you are in retreat in the mosques. These are the limits prescribed by Allah, so approach them not. Thus does Allah expound His commandments to the people, so that they may safeguard themselves against evil" (2 : 188).

The idea of the fast has been inculcated in all religious disciplines which are based on revelation, though strict conformity to the ordinances relating thereto is no longer insisted upon. Indeed, within some disciplines the fast has been reduced to a purely symbolic observance. In Islam the ordinances relating to the fast are clearly stated and defined and to the degree of their applicability they are strictly observed. A tendency towards greater rigidity is sometimes encountered and has to be checked and countered through exposition of the true purpose of the fast and of the meaning of the regulations and their spirit.

Subject to the permissible exemptions, the observance of the

fast is obligatory upon every adult Muslim during the month of Ramadhan, the ninth month in the lunar calendar current in Islam. As the lunar year is shorter by about eleven days than the solar year, Ramadhan rotates through the year and the seasons, arriving eleven days earlier every year. Thus in every part of the earth it progresses through every season in turn. In the tropics, when Ramadhan falls in the summer season, not only are days longer than in the winter but the fast entails additional hardship on account of the heat, as normal occupations and pursuits have to be carried on and in the intense heat and dryness a severe degree of thirst may have to be endured through several hours each day. The fast is, however, in no sense a penance. It is a physical, moral and spiritual discipline, and the object is the promotion of righteousness and security against evil. Through the experience of the fast the worshipper is impelled to exalt Allah for His having provided the guidance and is prompted to the beneficent use of His favours and bounties (2 : 186).

Other Fasts

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Outside Ramadhan a voluntary fast may be observed at any time, except on the two festival days. The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, often observed a fast on Monday and Thursday ; but he did not approve of a voluntary fast being observed on a Friday.

A fast is prescribed as an expiation or as an alternative penalty in respect of certain crimes or defaults, but in those cases also the object is the promotion of physical, moral and spiritual values. For instance, if a person on Pilgrimage to the House of Allah is unable to offer the sacrifice of an animal as prescribed he should observe the fast for three days during the course of the Pilgrimage and for seven days after return home, making up ten altogether (2:197). The expiation of an oath is a fast for three days (5:90). The alternative penalty for killing game while on Pilgrimage is a fast for a number of days corresponding to the number of animals killed. The alternative penalty for manslaughter is a fast for two con-

secutive months (4 : 93) and the same the penalty for *Zihar*, a frivolous declaration by a husband that henecforth consorting with his wife would amount to consorting with his mother, a hateful method of pronouncing a divorce, practised in pre-Islamic days abolished by Islam (58:5).

A vow of silence during a certain period (19:11) has also been described as fast. (19:27).

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Physical Observance

The observation of a fast, whether obligatory or voluntary, or by way of expiation or as a penalty, is subject to the same regulations. The period of the daily fast extends from the first flush of dawn normally about an hour and a quarter before sunrise, till after sunset. During this period neither food nor drink or nourishment may pass through the lips of a person who is observing the fast. Nor should any drug or other substance be swallowed or injected into the system. The fast may, however, be discontinued in case of emergency and would be terminated if the person observing the fast becomes sick. Nor should there be any consorting between husband and wife or any approach to it. The fast must not be continued beyond sunset even if nothing is immediately available for terminating the fast save a few drops of water, a pinch of salt or sugar, a bit of stale bread or a dried date, etc.

If during the fast food or drink should be swallowed in complete forgetfulness of the fast, that would not vitiate the fast and the fast should be completed till nightfall. Should, however, something be swallowed through carelessness, even involuntarily, the fast is vitiated and cannot be continued.

It is customary and is considered desirable that a light breakfast should be taken immediately before the commencement of the fast. The breaking of the fast after sunset should not be made an occasion for gorging oneself with food and drink. This would be in contravention of the fast and would be a departure from the example of the Holy Prophet, on

whom be peace, which must be adhered to. It could also prove harmful to health.

The month of Ramadhan is a period of intensive training in beneficent values. Abstention from food and drink and conjugal relations for a certain number of hours each day through a month is a valuable exercise in endurance and steadfastness. But that is only the outer shell, as it were of the fast. Yet even this has a great social significance. It brings home to the well-to-do sector of society the meaning of hunger and thirst. Privation ceases, in their case also, to be a mere expression and becomes an experience shared in common with all. The consciousness that a large number of their fellow beings have to go hungry most of the time is sharpend and there is great eagerness to share with them the bounties that Allah has, of His grace, bestowed on themselves.

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Main Purpose

The true purpose of Ramadhan, as of all forms of Islamic worship is to draw people closer to Allah. Though normal pursuits and ocupations are carried on as usual, the emphasis on moral and spiritual values and concentration on them are intensified, and everything is subordinated to the main purpose. The hearing, the sight, the tongue, the mind are all under stricter control. For instance, not only vain talk, but much talk is also eschewed, so that there should be greater concentration on rememberance of Allah and reflection upon His attributes.

The Holy Prophet has said : He who abstains from food and drink during the period of the fast but does not restrain himself from uttering a falsehood starves himself to no purpose. It is related of him that during Ramadhan his own concern for and care of the poor, the needy, the sick and the orphan was intensified manifold, and that his charity knew no limit.

Recitation

The study of the Quran and reflection over the Divine

Signs recited therein takes up the greater part of the time that can be garnered by reducing the other demands upon it to a minimum. Divines and scholars carry on discourses on the Quran throughout the month. Voluntary Prayer during the latter part of the night is deemed obligatory during Ramadhan but may be offered individually or in congregation. For the convenience of those who may find it difficult to proceed to a mosque at that hour to take part in the service, a congregational service is held after *'Isha* (Evening Service). Whether held after *'Is'a* or before *Fajar* the follow up passage after the Fatiha assumes considerable proportions. The service comprises eight *raka'as*, offered in four units of two *raka'as* each, and is led by an Imam who is an *Hafiz*, that is one who has learnt the whole Quran by heart. During this service the recitation from the Quran is made in sequence and the recitation of the whole of the Quran is completed during Ramadhan. This entails the recitation of approximately one twenty-eighth of the Quran in the course of the daily service, one eighth of that portion being recited as the follow-up passage after the Fatiha in each *raka'a*. The Imam, of course, recites from memory and the congregation follows the recitation with rapt attention.

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That is another unique feature of Islam. No less than seventy times is the Scripture of Islam referred to in the Revelation itself by the name Quran. The word means that which is repeatedly read, recited, proclaimed. It is the only Scriptures which is in its entirety experessed in the words of the revelation. It is thus the only one which is literally the Word of God. Its very name is a prophecy that it will be widely and repeatedly read, recited and proclaimed. Its text, in the words of the revelation, is preserved intact and in its proper sequence in the memories of millions of its devotees from generation to generation. Hundreds of millions read and recite portions of it in Prayer services and otherwise in the course of the day and night around the globe. During Ramadhan the number is greatly augmented. Numberless people read it through by themselves during that month. Others hear it interpreted and expounded.

A much larger number hear it recited from beginning to end in the course of the service just described. All this in the very words of the revelation in which it was sent down close upon 1400 years ago. That in itself is a matchless Divine Sign and Testimony.

I'tikaf

During the last ten days of Ramadhan many people go into seclusion, as it were, in a mosque and devote the whole of their time, not occupied by the obligatory and voluntary services, to the study of the Quran and the rememberance of Allah. This period of complete devotion of a worshipper's time to the exercise of the purely spiritual values, is the culmination of the physical, moral and spiritual discipline instituted by Islam. To carry such a discipline farther would be a sort of asceticism or monasticism which is not approved of in Islam (57 : 28).

Prohibitions

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Complete abstention from food and drink during the period of the fast does not constitute so great a hardship for a Muslim as adhetents of other disciplines may be disposed to imagine. Muslim children are brought up in an atmosphere of respect for and devotion to the values indicated by the faith. Very early they begin to exhibit an eagerness to practise them. Parents have often to restrain young children from observing the fast. They are trained into endurance of the rigours of the fast through a gradual process spread over a number of years. A child of twelve or thirteen may be permitted to observe the fast on three or four days at intervals during one Ramadhan. The following year he may be permitted to increase the number to eight or ten. In the third year he may be content with fasting on each alternate day. In the fourth year he would be ready to assume the full obligation.

Another very helpful factor is furnished by the dietary regulations of Islam. In the matter of food the prohibitions are : blood, the flesh of an animal that dies of itself and is

slaughtered for food, the flesh of swine and the flesh of an animal on which the name of any other than Allah has been invoked, meaning thereby sacrifices made to idols or other gods and offerings made to saints or to any being other than Allah (2. 174 : 5.4). The first three categories are prohibited because they are harmful for the body, and that which is harmful for the body is necessarily harmful for the spirit. The last prohibition relates to something which is manifestly harmful morally and spiritually in as much as it involves association of others with Allah.

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A relaxation is made in the case of a person who is driven by necessity and to whom no other means of sustenance and nourishment is for the time available. Such a one may partake of a prohibited article of food, consuming only that much as he may consider neceessary for his immediate need. In such instance priority is given to the need of maintaining and sustaining life, as against the possibility of such harm, if any, as might result from the consumption of a minimum quantity of the forbidden article (2. 174).

Liquor and all intoxicants are forbidden. It is recognised that some people may derive some pleasure or advantage from the use of liquor or other prohibited article, but it is pointed out that the harm resulting from their use is far greater than any pleasure or advantage that might be derived from it (2.220). The prohibition however is clear and absolute.

> "O ye who believe, liquor, gambling, idols and divining arrows are only an abomination of Satan's handiwork. So shun each one of them that you may prosper. Satan's design is only to promote enmity and hatred between you through liquor and gambling and to keep you back from the remembrance of Allah and from *Salat*. Will you desist" ? (5:91-92).

(*To be continued*)

World Press on The London Conference on "Jesus' Deliverance from the Cross"

Catholic Herald 9 December 1977

Muslim sect with doubts about Christ

Britain is a field ripe for conversion to Islam, according to Imam Rafiq, the leader of the Ahmadiyya Muslim sect in this country.

A nation-wide crusade is to be launched next year culminating in an international conference in London which will take as its theme "The Deliverance of Jesus from the Cross."

Speaking at the launching of the crusade, Mr. Rafiq explained that the Ahmadiyyas felt it was time to bring Europe and America back to a living communion with God. He felt Christianity had failed to do this...

The beliefs which will be promulgated throughout Britain next year by sermons from doorstep missionaries and the distribution of Ahmadiyya literature, differ from main-line Islam as well as from Christianity...

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They have taken great interest in the Turin Shroud, which they hope will prove conclusively that Jesus was alive when he was taken down from the Cross. They allege that after Jesus had been cared for by his apostles, he went to India in search of the Lost Tribes of Israel.

Their most tangible evidence is an ancient tomb in Kashmir which they say has been "confirmed" by achaeological excavation although they refuse to allow the tomb to be opened on the grounds that such action would be contrary to Muslim law.

They identify the tomb as the resting place of *Yus Asaph* which they claim is the Arabic form of "Jesus the Gatherer"

although the Koranic form of Our Lord's name is *Aisa.*

The Ahmadiyyas are as optimistic as they are evangelical. Missionaries have been sent to places as unlikely as Rome..... They believe they will succeed in effecting their founder's prophecy of international acceptance of Ahamadiyyan Islam.

Each convert undertakes to give 16 per cent of his income to a central fund to finance schools, printing presses and scholarships.

Church Times, London, Friday, December 9, 1977

Mission to Christians by Muslims

The Islamic Ahmadiyya Movement is to launch a £I million missionary crusade in Britain which will include evangelisation of committed Christians.

Church leaders approached by the *Church Times* have responded tolerantly, though with some caution, to the news. They have expressed the hope that the freedom to evangelise which is possessed by Muslims in Britain may now also be extended to Christians in certain less tolerant Islamic countries.

The news of the proposed crusade was announced by the Imam of the London Mosque, Mr. B. A. Rafiq, at a Press conference held at the Waldorf Hotel last week. It will be part of a world-wide missionary campaign, and will have as a central event an international three-day conference in London next June on the theme "The deliverance of Jesus from the Cross."

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The Movement claims that Christ was removed from the cross while still alive, that he travelled to India in search of the lost tribes of Israel and that he finally died at the age of 120 in Kashmir, where it is said his tomb can still be seen.

Mr. Rafiq told the Press conference that believers in Britain numbering about ten thousand (mostly among the

immigrant communities), had promised £ 1 million to help the missionary effort and that £125,000 had already been subscribed. Chiefly the money would be used on production of literature, he said.

Knocking at doors

Followers of the Movement would be going out making contacts and knocking at doors, "excatly as other evangelistic movemets do in this country." At present the Movement had five full-time missionaries in this country and hoped to have another six or seven here from Pakistan by the end of next year.

Mr. Rafiq said that they were not expecting any objections—the British were a tolerant people and after all, Christian missionaries had been going all over the world doing the same thing. But, he added, this was not to be taken as a holy war of the sort that had occurred in the past.

This was felt to be the right time to launch such a crusade because, among other things, Christians were showing an intense interest in the Turin shroud, which the Ahmadiyya Movement believed to be authentic, declaring that the image on it could only have been produced by a living man.

Asked afterwards by the *Church Times* whether the Movement's crusade would include evangelisation of people already committed to a Christian Church, Mr. Rafiq replied: "Indeed, yes."

The Bishop of Guildford (the Right Rev. David Brown), chairman of the General Synod's Board for Mission and Unity, told the *Church Times* this week that, in a pluralistic society like Britain was becoming, there should in his view be clear guidelines about what was or was not proper in such missionary activity.

Religious duty

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He thought that improper pressure in the form of material inducement or psychological pressure should never be brought on people to make them change their faith; nor should the heart

of another person's faith ever be destructively criticised.

Bishop Brown, a specialist in Islamic studies and a former missionary in Africa and the Middle East, who has often written and spoken sympathetically about Islam, said he thought it was a religious duty to share the treasures of one's religions experience with others "and I have never hesitated to do that with my Muslim friends."

However, he hoped that, if this kind of tolerance was practised in Britain, it would be reciprocated in those Muslim countries where Christians were in a minority.

A Challenge

A spokesman for the Evangelical Alliance told the *Church Times* that they had been aware for the past two years of the increasing activities of Muslims and members of other faiths in Britain and for that reason had last year appointed a commission on the Christian approach to those of other faiths. It is, due to report next autumn.

The spokesman added: "The EA hopes that the publicity now given to Islamic missionary activity in Britain will challenge the Churches here to fresh application to their evangelistic task."

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The Life of Faith, London, 10 December, 1977.

Ahmadiyya Muslims Launch Crusade in London

by

R. I. Brown

The Imam of the London mosque held a press conference at the Waldorf Hotel last Friday to publicise an international three-day conference in London next June, as part of a world wide missionary campaign. The theme of the conference will be 'The deliverance of Jesus from the cross.' It will be addressed by orientalists, archaeologists, scholars and theologians of many religions.

FOUNDER

The founder of this very missionary sect of Islam was Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, who was born in Qadian in the Punjab in 1835. His followers claim that it was revealed to him in 1890 that he was the promised Messiah. It was also revealed to him that Jesus did not die on the cross, but was taken down alive by the disciples. These 'revelations' and his own researches enabled him, they claim, to discover the tomb of Jesus in a valley of Kashmir, near Srinagar, India.

The movement has established 135 active missions in over forty countries, and has witnessed a considerable growth in membership. To finance its activities, all members are expected to contribute 16 per cent of their income to a central fund. The central fund finances schools, scholarships, printing presses, magazines and other activities. The approaching centenary of the Ahmadiyya movement has encouraged members to contribute £1 million for the crusade. Already £125,000 has been contributed in Britain, and a new mosque has been built in Denmark.

It should be clearly recognised that the movement forms no part of orthodox or Sunni Islam, and, in fact, is proscribed in many Muslim lands. From the Christian point of view, however, it should be realised that we meet again the orthodox denials of the authenticity of the Bible, also of the deity and atoning work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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THEME

The theme of the conference itself will be the deliverance of Jesus from the cross, and part of the crusade will be a conference in Turin in Italy to consider the authenticity of the shroud said to be used to wrap the body of Jesus Christ, and which demonstrates that He must have been alive when He was embalmed.

This indicates a most significant departure from orthodox Islam, as the Koran states categorically 'they did not kill him, they did not crucify him, but a likeness was made for them' (i.e. the Jews)...

The conference will be held at the Commonwealth Institute, Kensington, London, June 2-4, 1978. There will be a great drive on literature, and tracts of all kinds will be produced, besides an exhibition of relics and other material.

The London conference will be addressed on the last day by the supreme head of the Ahmadiyya movement, the third successor to the Promised Messiah.

Islam is thus continually on the offensive, and this crusade surely constitutes a challenge to every Christian to meet it in the spirit of Raymond Lull, of the thirteenth century, who declared that we should meet it 'by love, prayers, and the pouring out of blood and tears." Christians should also prepare themselves to take the Gospel to Muslims. They should of course be familiar with their own Scriptures and what they clearly teach about the deity of Christ, and not only the historicity of the death of Jesus but the necessity of it bound up in the love and holiness of God Himself. Despite what the Ahmadiyyas say, God cannot be known in Islam. He is remote, unknownable ; and this is heightened by the fact that the cardinal sin in Islam is that of 'shirk' or associating anything or anybody with God. Far other is the word of our Lord, 'this is eternal life, that they might know Thee the one true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.'

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"WEEKEND" Sunday, January 22, 1978, Colombo.

Christ Died & Lay Buried in Kashmir

By O. N. Koul

The theory that Christ died and was buried in Kashmir is now being investigated here by two British journalists.

The theory is based on the thesis originally propounded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian in his book "Jesus in India". Ahmad founded the Ahmadiyya movement in Islam.

The book, it is claimed, presented "the great truth disclos-

ed by divine revelation concerning the crucifixion and post-crucifixion life of Jesus."

The theory is based on the assertion that Jesus stayed on the cross "for too short a space of time to render possible his death". It is further argued that "two thieves crucified along with Jesus did not disappear when taken down from the cross."

Explaining the theory, Sufi Mutiur Rahman Bengalee says in his "The Tomb of Jesus", "It is noteworthy that faith in the physical Resurrection of Jesus and in his ascension to the sky in the sense in which the Christians would have us believe involve three things :

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Absurdities

"First the actually dead person came back to life. Second, the physical body was lifted up to the sky. And the third, the assumption that the sky is a physical locality like the earth where the inhabitants of this planet can live as they do here in this world. It is obvious that all these are physical absurdities."

All evidence goes to prove that on the cross Jesus was "only apparently dead in a state of unconsciousness" and that "a secret plot was designed by Jesus' disciples for his rescue in which Pilate himself played an important role" and further "Jesus had to take recourse to disguise for fear of again being arrested."

The theory goes on to point out that Jesus travelled to Kashmir, India, Afghanistan and the surrounding provinces which "represent the ten lost tribes of Israel."

It is further pointed out that Jesus was called the "Messiah" because he was a great traveller. The great Arabic lexicon, Lisanul-Arab, is quoted as having observed that "Jesus has been named Massiah because he was a traveller who would not settle at any place."

A traveller of his order, it is stated,' Jesus came to Punjab by way of Afghanistan, and after paying visits to Be-

naras, Nepal and Tibet, finally arrived in Kashmir where he settled down.

Inscription

That Jesus also died in Kashmir is sought to be substantiated by the discovery at Khanyar in Srinagar of a tomb with the inscription "Yus Asaf", belived to have come to Kashmir some 1,900 years ago from some western country.

"Yus Asaf" could be none other than Jesus. This is proved by a variety of circumstances. First the word "Yus", is nothing but "Yasu", the Arabic name for Jesus. Second, Asaf is the Hebrew form of "Asaph", meaning the gatherer.

"Yus Asaf", therefore, means "Jesus the gatherer", as Jesus came to gather the lost tribes of Israel.

A writer, John Noel wrote in 1930, "Of recent years certain explorers have also come upon traces of the story of the sojourn of Jesus in these regions. In one version of the story he is said to have come to confer and argue with the Buddhist monks on the doctrine of reincarnation during the years of his young manhood, the period of which there is no Biblical record in regard to his where-abouts."

Missionaries

Meanwhile a number of young people being trained as missionaries at the London Mosque by an Islamic movement founded in India in the last century will go out into the streets of Britain and Ireland later this year in a drive to win converts.

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The movement is the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam. It established a mission in London as far back as 1914, and already has six fully-qualified missionaries, including an Englishman, Mr. B. A. Orchard, who heads their branch in Scotland. The London Mosque, built in 1924, is their UK headquarters.

There are about 10,000 members of the movement in Britain, including Sir Muhammad Zafrulla Khan former President of the United Nations General Assembly and retired Chief

Justice of the International Court of Justice, The Hague, Holland.

"We are now training about 30 people, some of whom where born in this country," said Mr. Muhammad Akram Ghauri, a former college lecturer who now works full time for the London mission 'They are all aged between 18 and 30, and will approach people in the street, go to their houses and meet them wherever they can to tell them about our mission."

Symposium

Although missionary work in this country has been carried out regularly since the opening of the mission, the movement is launching a fresh drive in June this year to coincide with an international symposium to be held in London on Islam and Christianity.

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The main purpose of the symposium, being organised by the movement, will be to discuss a claim by the movement's founder, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani, that Jesus Christ did not die on the Cross but died a natural death and is buried in Kashmir, India.

Mr. Ghauri says that this will be the first time that such an international symposium has been held anywhere. Papers will be read by Muslim as well as non-Muslim scholars, and there will be an exhibition of literature produced by eminent historians and writers on the subject.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, who was born in Qadian, India, in 1835, and founded the movement in the Punjab in 1889, claimed through a book that Jesus went into a swoon and was taken down from the Cross alive. He was then nursed by his disciples until he had recovered enough to make a secret departure from Palestine in search of 10 Israelite tribes who had migrated to Kashmir.

In another book called "Jesus in India", Ahmad produced a map of the route which, he claimed, Jesus took to India via Afghanistan. He maintained that the tomb of Prophet Yus Asaf, which still exists in Srinagar, was, in fact, that of Jesus.

His writings on the subject created much interest among Christians in India and elsewhere. Lord Irwin, a former Viceroy of India and a devout Christian, visited the tomb in 1939, having been fascinated by Ahmad's claim.

Members of the movement say their founder's claim is now beginning to be accepted by Western scholars and medical experts, and the symposium will be an important step forward in resolving the issue once and for all.

Followers of the movement—known as Qadianis or Ahmadiyyas — number about 10,000,000, and are scattered throughout the world. Nearly half of them are in Pakistan. There are also about 250,000 Qadianis in India, mainly in the Bombay, Madras and Calcutta regions.

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Evening Standard 29 March, 1978.

Christ's tomb found in Kashmir claim

AN INDIAN archaeologist believes he has found the tomb of Jesus Christ in Kashmir.

Imam of the London Mosque, Mr. B.A. Rafiq, says Professor F.M. Hassnain would be visiting London in June to present evidence for his claim at an international conference to discuss the concept that Jesus did not die on the Cross.

"Professor Hassnain—Kashmir's state director of archaeology—has authorised me to say he has discovered a Christian cross in the tomb in Kashmir," Mr Rafiq told a conference in Birmingham.

"He has also discovered and has deciphered certain inscriptions on stones which support this claim."

Leader

Mr Rafiq is leader in Britain of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam which believes Jesus did not die on the Cross.

They say he was taken down by his disciples and recovered from his wounds before travelling to India. There he died at a great age and was buried in a valley in Kashmir.

Mr Rafiq told the conference, organised by the movement, that Professor Hassnain was not an Ahmadi, "He does not believe what we believe—so his opinion is quite unprejudiced.

"The tomb, at Srinigar, was known to all as the tomb of Jesus the Gatherer. It had a Christian cross and a slab of stone in which the sculptor had cut an outline of two feet pierced with holes.

"These holes correspond to where the nails that pierced the feet of Jesus would be." said Mr. Rafiq.

Professor Hassnain plans to show photographs of the tomb at the conference in June, also organised by the movement which is launching a crusade to convert the world to Islam.

Those attending—archaeologists, orientalists and theologians from all over the world—would hear evidence presented by the professor from Sanskrit, Persian and Jewish sources to support his claim.

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Dignity

One Sanskrit book, the Bhavishya Maha Purna, written in AD 115, relates how some 40 years before a king travelling in the Himalayas met a man of great dignity who told him he was the Son of God, born of a virgin and that he had suffered in a far away country.

Another book the professor will cite was the Tarikhi-Azmi which says the Srinigar tomb was that of a prophet and a prince from a foreign land whose name was Yus Asaph.

Professor Hassnain says Yus stands for Yusu, the Arabic name for Jesus. Asaph is the Hebrew form of the word "gatherer."

Some Christians claim Christ was not dead when taken down from the Cross and they cite the nature of "blood-stains" found on the Turin shroud as evidence. The shroud is believed

by increasing numbers to be a relic from the more traditional site of Christ's tomb at Calvary and due to go on display at Turin Cathedral later this year.

Evening Standard

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Clash over sect who say Christ died in India

By Leana Pooley

DID CHRIST die in India? This is the question under discussion—to the consternation of several Christian bishops—at a conference at the Commonwealth Institute, Kensington, on June, 2, 3 and 4 which has been organised by the Ahmadiyya Movement.

The Ahmadis, an evangelical Moslem sect, believe that Christ did not die on the cross, and subsequently travelled to India to discover the lost tribes of Israel and died of old age in Kashmir.

They say Christ was not dead when he was taken down from the cross, but was revived by his friends in the sepulchre and was later seen in the flesh by a number of his disciples.

"If you read your Bible," explains B. A. Rafiq, Imam of the London Mosque in Southfields, near Wimbledon, "you will see that it is clear that he did not die on the cross. The Gospels tell us of how he appeared to his apostles many times, and even ate with them."

The Imam argues his case around the follwing facts:

*That Christ must have been still alive when a Roman soldier pierced his side with a spear, as blood and water flowed (blood congeals in a dead body).

*That the two other men crucified at the same time (although older and less fit than Christ) were stil alive when they were taken down and only died when their bones were

broken.

Differ

*That Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus rubbed the body with spices to revive Christ, not to embalm him ("spices would made a body rot more quickly in that climate").

The Ahmadis find it unbelievable that Christ, a holy prophet, should have been destroyed. "Why should God prevent Abraham from sacrificing his own son and not save Christ?" asks Mr. Rafiq.

Where the Ahmadis differ from other Moslems is that they do not believe that Christ will return to earth. In fact, it was revealed to the founder of the movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (who was bron in 1835 in Punjab), that he himself was the Promised Messiah. And he it was who rediscovered the tomb of Christ near Srinigar in Kashmir.

The movement now has 10 million followers throughout the world (10,000 in this country) and their faith is strengthened by a small paper back book, Jesus in India, researched and written by Ahmad.

This book, which among other things notes that many towns in northern India are named after Syrian counterparts, is backed by more recent research by Mr Rafiq.

The tomb at Srinigar, he says, is known as the tomb of Yus Asaph. "Yus" is also "Yasu," the Arabic for Jesus, and "Asaph" is the same as the Hebrew "Asif," meaning the gatherer.

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"It is a Jewish tomb, since it does not point to Mecca." says Mr Rafiq, "and at the head there are two footprints sculpted in the stone. When we shone very bright lights on to them we could see holes in the soles. These must be the marks of the nails."

So far, reaction to the Ahmadiyya Movenent has been fairly mixed.

"Moslems tend to call us heretics," says Mr. Rafiq with a shrug.

"Just recently I have had letters from eight Christian bishops denouncing us for holding this conference.

"One went so far as to write that if what we believe is true, then it would show up the Christian religion to be a fraud.

"We have been persecuted before. The truth is always persecuted."

Putney and Roehampton Hearld, June 1, 1978

Attention of world on Ahmadi Conference

The Commonwealth Institute in London is the venue this week of a conference which has already made headlines throughout the world. The theme of the conference "The Deliverance of Jesus From the Cross" has caught the attention of television and radio networks, newspapers and magazines in North and South America, Europe and Africa as well as the East.

Never before has there been such a gathering of distinguished archaeologists, Orientalists, scholars and theologians of many faiths gathered together to debate and discuss this question.

The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Hume, will be sending an observer. There will also be representatives of the Church of England. And many individual groups of clergymen from independent churches have reserved seats.

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The conference, which lasts three days starts tomorrow (Friday). The principal speaker on the last day will be Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih III.

He has flown in from Pakistan for the conference.

He was welcomed on arrival in Britain by the High Commissioners of a number of Commonwealth countries, ambassadors of other countries and by the Imam of the London Mosque, which is sited in Gressenhall Road, Putney.

Khalifatul Masih III will be the guest of honour at a reception in the House of Commons.

The reception has been organised by Mr. Tom Cox, MP, to welcome him officially to Britain.

Nearly a thousand people will be attending on the last day to hear the address of Khalifatul Masih III.

Parties

As well as special parties leaving from the London Mosque in Putney, coaches and cars will be bringing people from the Midlands and from as far away in Britain as Aberdeen and Plymouth.

Hundreds of overseas visitors will also be attending, including, groups from the United States, Poland, Yugoslavia and most countries in West Africa.

Putney and Kensington police have made special arrangements to cope with the traffic.

More than 100 television and radio reporters, journalists and photographers have asked for tickets.

A film is being made of the conference and other events during the visit of Khalifatul Masih III.

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Volunteers

The conference has been organised by Mr. B. A. Rafiq, the Imam of the London Mosque. "This has been a project which has required literally thousands of hours from hundreds of volunteers," he said. "We have had to correspond in many languages with the people who are coming to London to put the result of their researches in front of the eyes of the world.

"We have had to organise the conference, arrange accommodation for guests and prepare and print brochures, tickets and other literature. It has been an enormous, but also a most enjoyable task.

"If we manage to throw more light onto this question, then all our work will be amply repaid."

London Airport welcome for Khalifatul Masih III

His Excellency the High Commissioner for Gambia was one of a host of dignitaries and VIPs who went to London Airport to welcome Khalifatul Masih III to Britain. The Khalifa was taken immediately to a VIP lounge and then to a press interview where journalists from many countries had gathered to meet him.

In a lively interview, conducted at several times in different languages, the Khalifa explained that is was both his duty and his privilege to come to Britain for the conference.

When he was asked what Jesus had to do with Islam he replied: "A very great deal, indeed."

He went on: "We believe in him as one of the true prophets of God. He is a prophet for us just as Moses is also a prophet for us. He is very important to us because he is one of the honoured company of Messengers and Prophets sent by God for the guidance of mankind.

"So it is, important to us to know and to set forth the correct historry and true teachings of Jesus. That is why this conference has been organised.

"We believe that Jesus did not die on the the Cross but recovered from his wounds and journeyed to Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and India.

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"I think it is now well recognised that the people of Afghanistan, Kashmir, and some parts of India are of Jewish origin, that they are descended from some of the tribes of Israel that left Judea at the time of the Great Dispersion.

"We want to bring the light of Islam to all people of all nations and so we have embarked upon a great evangelical project. This conference is part of that project."

The Khalifa went on: We are establishing missionary centres throughout Western Europe — Britain, France, Spain, Italy, Norway, Sweeden and Denmark. We are doing the same in both North and South America.

"Already this great project is producing results. We have established several mosques in Europe. The mosque recently opened at Gottenburg, Sweden, was financed out of the contributions of the Ahmadis of Britain.

"We have established newspapers and magazines, health centres, hospitals, schools and colleges in widespread areas of the earth. It is our duty and privilege to do these things for our brothers and sisters and we do them with great cheer—fulness."

There] are over ten million members of the Ahmadiyya movement and many of them occupy positions of importance.

"Eighty years ago there were only a few thousand of us. Today there are over ten million. In the near future there will be many millions in countries all our the world. That is not only our hope—it is a divine decree."

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'SUNDAY MERCURY' June 11, 1978

KHALIFA WELCOMED

Investigate tomb, says International Conference

More Than 15,00 people of many faiths and from countries all over the world crowded the galleries of exhibition hall at London's Commonwealth Institute last Sunday to hear Khalifatul Masih III address the final day of the international conference on the Deliverance of Jesus from the Cross.

The Khalifa, Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad, 69-year-old leader of the 10 million-strong Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, spoke from the circular central stage of the hall, ringed by distinguished members of the Movement. They included the High Commissioners of Gambia, Mauritius and Sierra Leone and the Ambassador of Liberia as well as 12 selected member's representing the 12 Tribes of Israel.

Throughout his hour-long address, the Khalifa faced a battery of flash and cine lights from news cameramen and a film crew. A

documentary film is being made of his visit to Britain.

Many individual Christians and clergymen attended during the three days, including a representative of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminister, Cardinal Hume, and two official representatives of the Roman Catholic Church in Poland, who came specially for the Conference.

In his address the Khalifa declared : "The unity of God is the basic reality of the universe, God is one ..... He alone is worthy of worship by all who are on the earth and in heaven-"

Central to Ahmadiyya belief is their claim that Jesus did not die on the Cross, but recovered and journeyed to India in search of the Lost Tribes of Israel dyring there at a ripe old age. His tomb is in Srinagar Kashmir.

On the second day of the conference, a resolution was unanimously passed by the 600 delegates attending, calling on the Indian Government to permit "reverential investigation" of the tomb. It was first identified by the founder of the movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmed.

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In addition to his attendnce at the conference, the Khalifa, who is accompanied by his wife, Hazrat Begum Sahiba, has had a busy round of engagements during his visit, and been interviewed and photographed by many British and foreign newspapers, radio stations and BBC television.

After his arrival at Heathrow Airport, where he was greeted by the Gambian High Commissioner, Mr. B. A. Rafiq, Imam of the London Mosque and chief organiser of the conference, Sir Zafrullah Khan and Professor Abdus Salam Madsen, he travelled in a motorcade to the Mosque at Putney. More than 1,000 members of the movement were waiting to receive him. All all along the route from the airport there were groups waving welcoming banners at his limousine which bore the Movemet's black and silver pennant.

At the Mosque, the Khalifa met and talked with delegates from all over the world and with his followers in Britain,

many of whom had travelled by special coaches from the North and Midlands.

On the opening day of the conference he led prayers at the mosque.

On Wednesday the Khalifa attended a reception arranged in his honour at the House of Commons by Tom Cox MP.

Sunday Mercury, June 11, 1978.

First speech held up by throng of delegates

Sir Zafrulla Khan made the opening speech of welcome at the conference in the theatre of the Commonwealth Institute. Such was the throng of world-wide delegates in the theatre foyer, where a magnificent collection of books and pictures was on display, that proceedings were delayed for 10 minutes.

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Sir Zafrulla said: "While it was expected that a study of the question whether Jesus Christ did or did not die on the Cross would arouse widespread interest, some people are unable to appreciate why this question should be of such serious concern to the Muslims that the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam should have promoted this conference.

"Unfortunately it is not yet sufficiently recognised in the West that Islam is the culmination of the Judaeo-Christian revelation and that the life and death of Jesus are of as vital concern to Muslims, particularly the members of the Ahmadiyya Movement, as they are to Jews and Christians.

"The Holy Quran, the Scripture of Islam requires faith in Jesus as a righteous prophet of God. The Jews believe that Jesus died on the Cross and thus became accusred. The Christians developed the doctrine that Jesus had died on the Cross.

"The Quran emphatically repudiates both these notions. It affirms clearly that Jesus was delivered from death on the Cross. He was taken down from the Cross in a state of

coma and was resusciated and carried his message to the dispersed tribes of Israel. The Quran further affirms that God provided shelter and security for Jesus on a pleasant plateau with springs of running water.

The Holy Prophet of Islam is reported as having said that Jesus lived to an honoured old age exceeding 120 years.

"The mass of orthodox Muslims, being influenced in later centuries by the Christian tradition adopted the utterly untenable notion that Jesus was taken up bodily into heaven before being placed upon the Cross. This is a direct contradiction of the Quran.

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"The founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, revived faith in the Quranic version of the delivery of Jesus from the Cross and his ultimate natural death at a ripe old age. In the nineties of the last century he announced that, after the crucifixion, Jesus travelled through the countries of the diaspora preaching to the scattered tribes of Israel. He finally settled in Kashmir among the Israelis of that region and died and was buried in Srinagar, where his tomb may be visited freely.

"He further affirmed that God had disclosed this aspect of the post-crucifixion life of Jesus to him and God in His wisdom would cause to appear progressively historical proofs in support of this verity.

"The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement claimed that he had come in the power and spirit of Jesus and that in his advent were fulfilled the prophecies concerning the second coming of Jesus. All these questions. the death, resurrection, ascension and second coming of Jesus, thererfore are of vital interest for Muslims, more particularly for the members of the Ahmadiyya Movement."

The Fiji Times, June 15, 1978

Christians invite Muslims to talks on Christ

The Ahmadiyya Overseas Mission in Fiji has received word from London that the British Council of Churches has invited the Muslim Ahmadiyya world body for a dialogue on the subject of Jesus Christ's "escape from the Cross".

The missionary in charge of the Fiji Mission, Maulana Din Mohammad Shahed said in Suva yesterday the invitation came after a three-day international Ahmadiyya conference in London last week.

The conference was attended by more than 1500 representatives from all over the world. Also present were observers from the Polish Catholic Church and a nominee of the Catholic Archbishop of Britain.

It discussed the deliverence of Jesus from the cross. The main speaker was the supreme head of the Ahmadiyya movement, Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad.

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Fiji SUN, June 19, 1978.

1500 attend London Ahmadiyya conference

The three-day international Ahmadiyya conference on the deliverence of Jesus from the Cross concluded successfully with an epoch-making address by the supreme head of the international Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad, at the Commonwealth institute, London.

More than 1500 representatives from all over the world including envoys of Gambia, Sierra Leone, Mauritius, Liberia and two official observers from Polish Roman Catholic Church and

an observer of Catholic Archbishop of United Kingdom were present.

Before the commencement of the conference, the British council of churches had issued a press release inviting the Ahmadiyya Jamaat to an unpublicised dialogue on the subject of Jesus' escape from the Cross, to be held in London or elsewhere.

The supreme head of Ahmadiyya movement in Islam, Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad, responded to the invitation by announcing that the Ahmadiyya Jamaat accepts the invitation of the council and further proposed that such dialogues should be held in London, Rome, a West African Capital and the United States on dates and conditions agreed upon by the parties.

The supreme head of Ahmadiyya movement also invited the Catholic Church to such dialogue.

Hon. Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan, former president of the UN and chief judge of international court of justice has written a book on "Deliverance From the Cross" which will soon be available with detailed report of the international London conference from Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, 82, Ratu Mara Road, Samabula.

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By Ali Muhammad B.A.,B.T.

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Printed at the Nusrat Art Press, by Malik Basharat Ahmad and published by M. Masud Ahmad B. A. Rabwah, Pakistan, from the office of the Review of Religions, Darulsadar, Rabwah.